

**Amendments to the Abstract:**

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

Limitation of the opening rate of the throttle valve is prohibited unless the following conditions have been all satisfied: (i) the engine speed detected at starting opening the throttle valve is below a prescribed speed; (ii) the throttle angle detected at starting opening the throttle valve is below a prescribed throttle angle; (iii) the target throttle-open angle is above a prescribed throttle-open angle; and (ix) the target opening rate of the throttle valve is above a prescribed opening rate.

~~Selected drawing: FIG. 4~~